

H-CAN Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

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Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

Background

- 1) What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held?

Wallingford-Swarthmore School Board President, Vice President. Vice Chair, WSSD Tax Commission. Appointed as parent/student advocate to 2 Pennsylvania Interagency Councils charged with assessing and implementing federal special education laws in the Commonwealth.

- 2) If you have previously held a government office:

- a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved?

Education

- b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on?

Co-Chair of the National Voting Rights Task Force of the Association of Pro Bono Counsel

- 3) If you have not previously held a government office, what community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.) In addition to my government service, I have been an active legal and community activist, including, but not limited to, the following:

Founder & Volunteer, Constitution High School Pipeline Program – 2005 to present

Developed program at Philadelphia magnet school to mentor low income students interested in legal profession.

Delco Election Protection – 2008 to present

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Member & Co- Chair Voting Rights Task Force, Assoc. of Pro Bono Counsel
– 2005 to present

Volunteer Attorney & Board Member, Philadelphia Volunteers for the Indigent Program – 2003 to present

Founding Board Member & Secretary, Philadelphia Legal Assistance Corporation – 1995-8, 2004-6

Member Advisory Board, Penn Law School Public Service Program 1994 to 1997

Philadelphia Bar Association

Co-Chair, Law Firm Pro Bono Committee - 2005 to present

Member, Host Committee - 2006 ABA Equal Justice Conference

Benjamin Franklin High School Student Legal Clinic, Organizer - 1995 to 1997

Co-Chair, Chancellor's Commission on Children's Rights - 1993 to 1995

Co-Chair, Children's Rights Committee - 1992 to 1994

Volunteer Attorney & Board Member, Support Center for Child Advocates - 1985 to present

Local Organizer Million Mom March

Founder WSSD Education Foundation

Volunteer: Chester Children's Chorus, Swarthmore United Methodist Church, Swarthmore Public Library, Swarthmore Recreation Association, Centennial Foundation

4) What is your plan to win this race?

To campaign vigorously on a platform promoting progressive issues, utilizing my deep connections throughout the district and the national perspective I have developed through 35 years of public interest advocacy across the country.

Please note: Although many of the following questions may be answered “yes” or “no” you should feel free to elaborate if doing so would provide a clearer statement of your position. If you believe you do not have enough information to answer a question, or have not formed an opinion, say so.

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I. Income and Wealth Inequality, and Benefit Programs.

- 1) To what level and by what date would you raise the minimum wage to ensure it provides a sustainable living wage?

At \$7.25, the federal minimum wage has not increased since 2009. This means that the family of a single parent working 40 hours/week at minimum wage will be in poverty. Clearly the minimum wage is too low if it will not lift wage earners above the poverty level. I support increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hour or something closer to an actual living wage while being mindful of inflationary pressure. I look forward to studying the impact of New York State's efforts in this area.

- 2) Would you support a single-payer health care system or seek to improve Obamacare, and how?

Ironically, I believe that Republican efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act have increased its popularity and made eventual adoption of a single payer option more likely. Until that occurs, I would support fixes to the acknowledged flaws in the ACA until we can achieve something similar to Medicare for all. To start, we need to push for Medicaid expansion and a public option. I am concerned about assuring healthcare for those most at risk while such transitions are implemented.

- 3) How would you support workplace unions?

By continuing to support collective bargaining rights and supporting labor in general. This country has a middle class because of the wages, benefits and working conditions for which unions fought, and which they made the standard. One cause particularly close to my heart is achieving pay and working conditions equity for working women, whether in construction, the office, or on the sporting field, as my firm did in representing the U.S. Women's Soccer and Hockey Teams in striking for better working conditions and developmental opportunities. I would support efforts to ratify the long overdue Equal Rights Amendment.

- 4) What reforms do you support for the banking system?

I support reinstating and invigorating the Community ReInvestment Act to require banks to allocate significant portions of their capital lending to local businesses and individuals. Lack of access to capital is a significant hindrance to local small businesses and entrepreneurs, especially in minority communities. We should reinstate

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Glass-Steagall or a version of it to prevent investment bankers from draining capital from local institutions. I support laws to requiring banks to act, first, as fiduciaries for their customers. In addition, we need effective measures to prevent banking institutions from becoming “Too Big To Fail” and repeating the mistakes that produced the financial crisis of the Bush years.

II. Campaign Finance and Voting Rights.

1) Would you support complete transparency regarding the funding of campaigns, including disclosure of all spending by wealthy donors?

Sunlight is a great disinfectant. Yes. I support full transparency and limits on spending. I would ban corporate spending in political campaigns and require complete disclosure of political spending.

2) Would you impose an individual and corporate cap on spending that applied to other types of political financing such as Super-PACs, advocacy groups and lobbyists?

I would ban corporate spending and apply limits on other financing similar to the limits on donations to ordinary PAC's that already exist. The current individual limit to an “ordinary” PAC is \$5000. That seems appropriate and would level the field significantly. None of this is possible until we pass laws to severely curtail the activities currently allowed after the Citizens United case. That would be one of my priorities.

3) What reforms would you support to make it easier to vote in Federal elections? (e.g., early voting, same day registration, a Federal Holiday on Election Day, Federal standards for voting rights in all states, a Constitutional Amendment establishing Voting Rights, restoration of the Voting Rights Act to its original scope, any or all of these choices?)

I support automatic voter registration upon one's 18th birthday for all U.S. Citizens. We need to reinstate the protections of the Voting Rights Act that were upended by the US Supreme Court in its Shelby decision. States should be given incentives to implement online registration and provide more flexible voting hours. I would also support ranked choice voting initiatives such as have been passed, with pro bono help from my firm, in Maine and proposed in Philadelphia. I am a long time election protection advocate and volunteer and am currently co-chair of the Voting Rights Task Force of the national Association of Pro Bono Counsel, challenging attempts to restrict the voting rights of vulnerable or marginalized citizens across our country. We

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also need to protect our elections from foreign threats, and punish those who would enable them or give them cover.

4) Would you support a publicly financed system of campaign financing?

Yes.

III. Climate Change. Would you support:

1) A tax on carbon?

Good in theory. Difficult and inefficient in practice. Conceptually the idea has merit but I would rather spend limited political capital to promote a more rapid transition to sustainable or renewable energy.

2) A full or partial ban on offshore drilling?

Unless the regulatory regime currently governing offshore drilling improves, we need to ban offshore drilling. My goal is to promote transition from fossil to renewable energy as swiftly as possible.

3) A ban, or other limitation, on fracking?

We need a stronger regulatory regime to address the challenges of providing affordable energy while protecting our environment. Without such protection, I would support a ban. The ME2 pipeline situation is unacceptable and a direct result of a poor regulatory regime that places the profits of energy companies ahead of the safety of local communities and the environment. The demand for fracking likely will wax and wane with the vagaries of the petroleum market and, as renewable energy becomes more economically viable, demand for fracking will fade. Toward that end, I want to focus efforts to promote sustainable energy, both to reduce demand for fracking and to provide consumers with more economically and environmentally viable energy production.

4) A ban on mountaintop removal mining?

Ban it. It destroys natural resources and severely harms communities.

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- 5) Legislation requiring 100% clean energy by a date certain and the funding needed to make it a reality?

It is obvious from a moral and environmental standpoint that clean energy is the direction in which we should move. Fortunately, the economics are on our side as well. I would like to see continued investment in both clean energy research and extension of clean energy tax credits and subsidies to speed up the transition to more sustainable, cleaner, and renewable energy production. We should work towards the 2050 goal.

IV. Immigration. Do you believe we should:

- 1) Provide a path toward citizenship for the 11 million residents who are here without papers?

Yes.

- 2) Allow non-citizens to buy health insurance under Obamacare?

Yes.

- 3) End the dumping of Central American immigrants in dangerous locations in their home countries?

We must end the deportation of people without due process and under conditions that increase the threat of violence.

- 4) Allow Syrian refugees and others subject to political violence to settle in this country?

Of course, with adults subject to appropriate screening.

V. Racial Justice. Do you believe the federal government should:

- 1) Provide incentives, or mandates, to:
- a. increase diversity in local police forces?
YES
 - b. require police to use body cameras?
YES
 - c. promote community policing?

YES - along with improved de-escalation training and the demilitarization of police.

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2) Ban private prisons?

Yes. Especially the one here in Delaware County. Having provided representation for juveniles who were unconstitutionally incarcerated in the Luzerne County "Cash for Scandal", it is clear that private profit incentives have no place in a a correctional system premised upon rehabilitation.

3) Ban the box that requires job applicants to declare prior arrests?

Yes.

4) Require that the environmental analysis for a permit for a polluting facility must consider both the disparate and cumulative environmental burden borne by a community?

Unclear. Need more information to form an opinion.

VI. Women's Rights. Do you support:

1) Enacting legislation to end wage discrimination based on gender?

Yes. Time is up. We should do it and do it now.

2) Guaranteeing affordable child care for every child?

We need strategies to make this possible, likely through a combination of tax credits and subsidies.

3) Requiring employers to provide paid family leave, paid vacation and paid sick days for every American worker?

Yes, for businesses larger than a certain size. We need to be mindful of the impact on small businesses.

The rules that govern what kind of companies were subject to the Affordable Care Act may be a good starting place for the size of company to be subject to regulations on paid family leave, paid vacation, and paid sick days.

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- 4) Providing federal funding for the full range of women's healthcare including abortion?

I support Planned Parenthood's position.

VII. War and Peace. Do you think the federal government should:

- 1) Repeal or modify the Patriot Act?

Significantly modify. It is far too intrusive and allows the government far too broad surveillance powers over U.S. Citizens.

- 2) Bar the US from torturing prisoners under any and all circumstances?

Yes. Unequivocally.

- 3) Cut the defense budget to instead support spending on health care and social service priorities at home?

Yes.

- 4) Ban first use of nuclear weapons and renew arms negotiations to lower nuclear stockpiles?

Yes. must work more closely with allies and others to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

VIII. Corporate Tax Policy. Do you think we should:

- 1) Repeal loopholes and tax subsidies throughout the federal tax code that benefit oil, natural gas, and coal special interests?

Yes.

- 2) Reverse or modify the Trump tax bill's corporate tax cuts in any particular way?

Yes. Repeal them. Trickle down economics has a proven record of failure. We need to invest that revenue in education and infrastructure to build our economy.

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IX. Education

- 1) What is your view of the appropriate role of testing in student and school evaluations?

While assessment has a role in assuring accountability, improvement and efficient allocation of funding, current mandates have overwhelmed the system.

- 2) How, if at all, should the federal government promote equity in school district funding?

Expansion of Title I and IDEA funding would significantly level the playing field. Since the IDEA was passed 40 years ago guaranteeing special ed services to children with disabilities the federal government has failed to provide even half of the funding needed to meet that commitment. Title I is a program created by the US Department of Education to distribute funding to schools and school district with a high percentage of students from low income families. Changes to the formula for allocating Title I funds maybe needed to better target impact.

X. Disability Advocacy

- 1) Medical marijuana is a known treatment that provides enormous benefit, but even with legalization it is still extremely difficult to obtain due to supply, insurance, and dangerous or inaccessible locations of dispensaries. There is also a need for more awareness and training among medical providers. How will you address this side of the pain management crisis?

We need to reform federal laws that restrict or punish states that have legalized or decriminalized marijuana. We also need to support research and education in the medical and scientific community to address these cutting edge developments.

- 2) People with disabilities are twice as likely to be victims of crime as those without disabilities. People with disabilities also are far more likely to suffer from police

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violence, partially because manifestations of disability can be misunderstood as defiant behavior. What legislation may help to address these issues?

We need legislation aimed at improving training for law enforcement officers on how to identify and interact appropriately with people with disabilities.

3) How will you help to ensure that students with disabilities receive the supports they require under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and/or Section 504 of the Americans With Disabilities Act, and that these protections are not dismantled?

One key is to improve funding for these programs. Another is to ensure that the US Department of Education is actually enforcing these laws instead of diverting public resources to charter and private schools.

4) Do you have a plan to ensure people are eligible for affordable health insurance regardless of pre-existing conditions? If yes, please describe.

Yes. Reinstate those parts of the Affordable Care Act that have been weakened.

XI. SENSIBLE GUN CONTROL

1) Should the state and federal governments be enabled and funded to keep detailed gun-death statistics so that gun deaths can be studied as a public health issue the way AIDS, cancer, and other causes of death are studied?

Yes. We need to reverse the federal ban on research into the causes of and solutions for gun violence.

2) What are your proposals to reduce gun deaths (from homicides, suicides, and accidents)?

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Mary Gay Scanlon is a longtime supporter of responsible legislation to reduce the plague of gun violence. Every day, 96 Americans die from gun violence. Not even our most precious spaces, our schools and churches, are immune. Many gun deaths are preventable, and research clearly shows that states with stricter gun laws have lower rates of gun violence. Now more than ever, we must pass sensible gun policy reform.

Mary Gay is committed to common sense reforms that keep guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. She believes that one can both respect the 2nd Amendment and advocate for sensible and responsible solutions to gun violence. In Congress, Mary Gay will introduce and support policies including, but not limited to:

Implement Stronger and Universal Background Checks

94% of Americans support background checks for all gun purchases. Background checks are the easiest and most effective way to keep guns out of the hands of violent people and prevent gun deaths.

Close Gun Show Loopholes

The 1968 Gun Control Act allows for unlicensed, private citizens to sell firearms to any individual at a “gun show” without a background check or sales record. Eliminating this gun show loophole will prevent criminals from buying guns and decrease the distribution of guns into the black market.

Reinstate 1994 Assault Weapon Ban

We need to restrict access to weapons of war that can be used to commit mass murder. The 1994 Federal Assault Weapons Ban should be reinstated and ownership of such weapons by private citizens should be regulated and monitored through a thorough background check. This should include a ban on high capacity magazines.

Require Domestic Abusers to Surrender Firearms

The gun homicide rate for women in the United States is 16 times higher than in the rest of the developed world. Restricting the sale or possession of guns to perpetrators of domestic abuse and those who have protection orders against them will protect American families, and women in particular. Gun owners who have protection orders

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filed against them should be required to turn over their firearms to law enforcement until a judicial determination or mental health assessment is made.

Funding Research into the Causes of Gun Violence

The NRA has successfully blocked research into gun violence by the CDC and other federal entities for decades. It has blocked proper reporting of gun violence incidents to prevent independent researchers from obtaining consistent and in depth data to prevent gun violence. That practice must end. We must fully fund gun violence research so that efforts to reduce gun violence can be informed by scientific opinion as well as constitutional concerns.

- 3) Do you believe all gun owners should be:
- a. licensed following a background check?
 - b. be trained and certified as proficient in gun safety?
 - c. Carry liability insurance?
 - d. Have to register each weapon and report all stolen or missing guns?

I am in favor of proposals, like these, which promote responsible gun ownership and use.